

REMARKS

The indication that claims 17 - 21 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims, is acknowledged.

By the present amendment, since claims 17 - 21 are directly dependent upon a base claim, the features of claim 17 have been incorporated into independent base claim 1, the features of objected to claim 18 have been incorporated into independent base claim 5, the features of objected to claim 19 have been incorporated into independent base claim 6, the features of objected to claim 20 have been incorporated into independent base claim 13, and the features of objected to claim 21 have been incorporated into independent base claim 14, with claims 17 - 21 being canceled, and claims 1, 5, 6, 13 and 14 being amended to represent objected to claims 17 - 21, respectively, rewritten in independent form. Thus, applicants submit that these independent claims and the dependent claims thereof should now be in condition for allowance. Applicants note that informalities in the claims have also been corrected.

As to the rejection of claims 1 - 4 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hwang et al (Patent 5,568,589) in view of Bisset et al (Patent No. 6,671,592B1); the rejection of claims 6 - 10 under 35 USC 102(b) as being unpatentable over Hwang et al (Patent 5,568,589) in view of Bisset et al (Patent No. 6,671,592B1), further in view of Jones et al (Pub. No. US2003/0025472A1); the rejection of claims 11 - 14 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hwang et al (Patent 5,568,589), and the rejection of claims 16 - 17 under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hwang et al (Patent 5,568,589) in view of Bisset et al (Patent No. 6,671,592B1); such rejections are traversed insofar as being proper, noting that the

Examiner apparently intended to reject claims 15 and 16 rather than claims 16 and 17 in view of the indication that claims 17 - 21 are objected to, and that the rejection of claims 6 - 10 under 35 USC 102(b) as being unpatentable over multiple references is improper. In any event, applicants submit that by the present amendment, these rejections have been obviated such that a discussion of the cited art in relation thereto is considered unnecessary.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, applicants submit that claims 1 - 16, the only claims remaining in this application, should now be in condition for allowance, and issuance of an action of a favorable nature is courteously solicited.

To the extent necessary, applicants petition for an extension of time under 37 CFR 1.136. Please charge any shortage in the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to the deposit account of Antonelli, Terry, Stout & Kraus, LLP, Deposit Account No. 01-2135 (Case: 503.43666X00), and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

ANTONELLI, TERRY, STOUT & KRAUS, LLP

/Melvin Kraus/ MK
Melvin Kraus
Registration No. 22,466

MK/jla
(703) 312-6600